



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/497,021	02/01/2000	Gregg S. Goyins	10992292-1	6980
22879	7590	02/08/2006	EXAMINER	
			NGUYEN, KEVIN M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2674	

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/497,021	GOYINS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kevin M. Nguyen	2674	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 November 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 11/11/2005, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new ground of rejection set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

- (1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,
- (2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:

Claim Objections

2. Applicant is advised that should claim 1 be found allowable, claim 20 will be objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate thereof. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 11, 20 and 24-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being

anticipated by Kahn et al (US 4,799,770) hereinafter Kahn.

5. As to claims 1 and 20, Kahn teaches a switchable polarizer for optical projection displays (a projection system 10, see Fig. 1), comprising

a first electrode [at least one busbar 35-1, see Fig. 3];

a second electrode [at least one busbar 35-2, see Fig. 3];

a layer of liquid crystal material positioned between the first and second electrodes [liquid crystal molecules 20, see Fig. 3];

wherein the first and second electrodes conduct current to heat the polarizer [a blank bright screen is produced by passing a current pulse in one of the conductive layers adjacent to the liquid crystal layer to heat the liquid crystal molecules and simultaneously or subsequently applying an electric field across the liquid crystal layer as the liquid crystal molecules cool down, see col. 4, line 65 through col. 5, line 3].

6. As to claim 11, Kahn teaches wherein the polarizer is a polarizer serves as a polarization compensator [an optical system 12 serves to split its output into four beams a, b, c and d, each directed onto one particular region of a reflective liquid crystal cell

Art Unit: 2674

14...., see col. 3, lines 48-61] is an optical projection display [a projection system 10, see Fig. 1, col. 3, lines 48-52].

7. Claim 24 shares similar limitations to those included in claim 1 and therefore the rationale of rejection will be the same. Claim 24 has the added limitation driving said set of electrodes to establish an electric field across said layer of liquid crystal to control polarization states of said liquid crystal. Kahn further teaches a blank bright screen is produced by passing a current pulse in one of the conductive layers adjacent to the liquid crystal layer to heat the liquid crystal molecules and simultaneously or subsequently applying an electric field across the liquid crystal layer as the liquid crystal molecules cool down, see col. 4, line 65 through col. 5, line 3.

8. As to claim 25, Kahn further teaches wherein said driving said set of electrodes to cause current to flow and said driving said set of electrodes to establish an electric field occur simultaneously [a current pulse in one of the conductive layers adjacent to the liquid crystal layer to heat the liquid crystal molecules and simultaneously or subsequently applying an electric field across the liquid crystal layer, see col. 4, line 65 through col. 5, line 3].

9. As to claim 26, Kahn further teaches wherein said driving said set of electrodes to cause current to flow and said driving said set of electrodes to establish an electric field occur in different operational modes [a current pulse in one of the conductive layers adjacent to the liquid crystal layer to heat the liquid crystal molecules and simultaneously or subsequently applying an electric field across the liquid crystal layer, see col. 4, line 65 through col. 5, line 3. Fig. 3 expressly shows at least one switch for

engaging different operational modes by closed/opened switch coupled to said set of electrodes, see claim 27 for “Drawing as a Reference”].

10. As to claim 27, Kahn further discloses wherein said driving said set of electrodes to cause current to flow includes: engaging a plurality of switches coupled to said set of electrodes [It is respectfully submitted that in the case law stated “Drawing as a Reference”, “Things clearly shown in reference patent drawing qualify as prior art features, even though unexplained by the specification”. See *In re Mraz*, 173 USPQ 25 (CCPA 1972). “A claimed invention may be anticipated or rendered obvious by a drawing in a reference, whether the drawing disclosure by accidental or intentional. However, a drawing is only available as a reference for what it would teach one skilled in the art who did not have the benefit of applicant’s disclosure”. See *In re Meng*, 181 USPQ 94, 97 (CCPA 1974). “Absent of any written description in the reference specification of quantitative values, arguments based on measurement of a drawing are of little value in proving anticipation of a particular length”. See *In re Wright*, 193 USPQ 332, 335 (CCPA 1977). Thus, Fig. 3 expressly shows closed/opened switches for engaging a plurality of switches coupled to said set of electrodes].

11. As to claim 28, Kahn further discloses wherein said driving said set of electrodes to cause current to flow applies symmetric bipolar signals to drive said first set of electrodes to a positive potential and to drive said second set of electrodes to a negative potential [AC voltage source connected between the front electrodes 35-1 and rear electrodes 35-2 through switch, see Fig. 3. The term “AC potential” or “AC voltage” defines an electric current that reverses direction sinusoidally and that has alternately

positive and negative values. See www.dictionary.reference.com, Source: WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University. Thus, positive voltage value and negative voltage value correspond to a first voltage signal and second voltage signal].

12. Claims 13, 14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Franklin (US 4,723,835)

13. As to claim 13, Franklin conventionally discloses a method of driving a switchable polarizer in one of two modes, the switchable polarizer having first and second electrodes and a liquid crystal material between the electrodes, wherein during a first driving mode, the electrodes heat the liquid crystal material (a switch 31 is closed, see Fig. 3, col. 4, lines 17-21), while during the second driving mode, the electrodes do not heat the liquid crystal material (the switch 31 is opened, see Fig. 2, col. 4, lines 14-16), said method comprising:

drawing equal currents through the first and second electrodes during the first driving mode [there is DC current flowing in electrodes when the switch 31 is closed, see col. 2, lines 53-56];

applying a first voltage signal to the first electrode and a second voltage signal to the second electrode [the positive voltage value and the negative voltage value correspond to a first voltage signal and second voltage signal, see claim 28 above] during both the first and second driving modes, the first and second voltage signals sustaining the currents drawn through the first and second electrodes during the first driving mode [the switch 31 is closed and DC current flows in electrodes during the first driving mode, referring to FIGS. 2 and 3 illustrate a source of AC potential 30 connected

Art Unit: 2674

between the front electrodes 13 and rear electrodes 17 through a switch 31. In FIG. 3, the switch 31 is illustrated as closed causing an orientation perpendicular to the electrodes 13 and 17 in the nematic molecules of the liquid crystal fluid 15 where the front electrodes 13 overlap the rear electrodes 17, see col. 4, lines 11-21].

14. As to claim 14, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein the drawing of currents through the electrodes includes coupling the electrodes to two current sources [The current path provided by the fixed potential connected to the heater is principally through the rear LCD electrodes and therefore the alternating currents across the rear electrode capacitor and the front electrode capacitor flowing through the fixed potential connection are different. This creates an imbalance with respect to the capacitance between the front and the rear LCD electrodes resulting in a net DC current flow, see col. 2, lines 48-56. Thus, there are two current sources, each which connects to each one of electrodes].

15. As to claim 16, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein the applying of the voltage signals to the electrodes includes applying first and second voltage signals that are alternating signals [a source of AC potential 30 connected between the front electrodes 13 and rear electrodes 17 through switch 31, see Figs. 2 and 3, col. 4, lines 11-13. The term "AC potential" or "AC voltage" defines an electric current that reverses direction sinusoidally and that has alternately positive and negative values. See www.dictionary.reference.com, Source: WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University. Thus, positive voltage value and negative voltage value correspond to a first voltage signal and second voltage signal].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

16. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

17. Claims 1-10 and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable by Franklin (US 4,723,835) in view of Ando et al (US 4,692,779) hereinafter Ando.

18. As to claims 1 and 20, Franklin conventionally discloses a switchable polarizer (see Fig. 2, a LCD display device, col. 1, lines 15-24), comprising:

a first electrode [a front electrode 13, see Fig. 2, col. 3, line 32];

a second electrode [a rear electrode 17, see Fig. 2, col. 3, line 51-52];

a layer of liquid crystal material positioned between the first and second electrodes [liquid crystal molecules 15, see Fig. 2, col. 3, lines 59-60];

wherein the first and second electrodes conduct current to heat the polarizer [with an alternating potential applied between the front and rear LCD electrodes and the heater connected to a fixed potential, an average DC current flows between the heater and the LCD electrodes because of the current path established between the LCD electrodes and heater power or ground resulting from the fixed potential connection to the heater, see col. 2, lines 17-24];

Accordingly, Franklin conventionally discloses teaches all of the claimed limitation except for optical projection displays;

However, Ando conventionally discloses the system explained with reference to FIG. 1 can only be applied to a display apparatus of an enlarged projection type, see col. 2, lines 41-43;

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement the LCD display device as conventionally disclosed by Franklin in the optical projection displays of Ando in order to achieve the benefit of intend to display for the optical projection system, because this would provide a large area of display with a memory characteristic at a high density, it requires a large output laser and a long time for writing one picture of image. Moreover, if the area of the liquid crystal device is increased, the writing time is further increased (see Ando, col. 2, lines 36-40).

19. As to claim 2, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein currents passing through the first and second electrodes are constant [an average DC current flows between the heater and the LCD electrodes, see col. 2, lines 17-24. The term "DC current" defines an electric current flowing in one direction only and substantially constant in value-- abbreviation *DC*. See www.dictionary.reference.com, Source: WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University. Thus, the DC current is constant current].

20. As to claim 3, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein the currents passing through the first and second electrodes are constant [an average DC current flows between the heater and the LCD electrodes, see col. 2, lines 17-24. The term "DC current" defines an electric current flowing in one direction only and substantially

constant in value--abbreviation DC. See www.dictionary.reference.com, Source: WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University. Thus, the DC current is constant current].

21. As to claim 4, Ando teaches a first and second electrodes apply a uniform electric field across the liquid crystal material [a uniform polarity of charge is imparted to the entirety or a part of the electric charge accepting member whereby the liquid crystal is uniformly oriented to its first stable state under a uniform electric field thus formed therethrough, see abstract, lines 5-9].
22. As to claim 5, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein no current passes through the first and second electrodes when the electrodes are not heating the polarizer [the switch is opened, there is no current flow, see FIG. 2, col. 4, lines 5-8].
23. As to claim 6, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein during a non-heating operation of the polarizer, no current passes through either electrode, and the first electrode is at a first potential and the second electrode is at a second potential different from the first potential [the switch is opened, there is no current flow in the electrodes to heat the liquid crystal molecules, see Fig. 2, col. 4, lines 5-8 and col. 4, lines 13-16].
24. As to claim 7, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein the first and second electrodes are transparent electrodes [electrodes 13 and 17 are clear ITO conductive electrodes, see col. 3, lines 31-36].
25. As to claims 8-10, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein the first electrode receives a first voltage signal and the second electrode receives a second voltage signal [a source of AC potential 30 connected between the front electrodes 13 and rear electrodes 17 through switch 31, see Figs. 2 and 3, col. 4, lines 11-13. The term "AC

potential" or "AC voltage" defines an electric current that reverses direction sinusoidally and that has alternately positive and negative values. See

www.dictionary.reference.com, Source: WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University.

Thus, positive voltage value and negative voltage value correspond to a first voltage signal and second voltage signal].

26. As to claim 21, Franklin conventionally discloses wherein each of said set of electrodes includes a respective first contact (the positive voltage terminal of the source of AC potential 30 couples to the first electrode, see Fig. 3) and a respective second contact (the negative voltage terminal of the source of AC potential 30 couples to the second electrode, see Fig. 3).

27. As to claim 22, Franklin conventionally discloses a set of switches that selectively enable current to flow through said set of electrodes [the switch is closed, there is current flow in the electrodes to heat the liquid crystal molecules, see Fig. 2, col. 4, lines 17-21].

28. Claims 15 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Franklin in view of Ando, and further in view of Kato et al (US 4,603,946) hereinafter Kato.

The combination of Franklin and Ando conventionally discloses all of the claimed limitation, except an output of an amplifier couples to each of electrodes;

However, Kato teaches a related LCD device which includes the operational amplifiers 27 and 29 have their output terminals connected across the electrodes 1a and 2a (see Fig. 4, col. 36-37);

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement the operational amplifiers 27 and 29 as taught by Kato in the combination of Franklin and Ando in order to achieve the benefit of intend to drive the LCD device, because one of ordinary skill in the art would be reasonably apprised of operational amplifier would provide the feedback/gain of the voltage/current values at the output terminal of each of operational amplifiers.

29. Claims 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kahn in view of Franklin, and further in view of Kato et al (US 4,603,946) hereinafter Kato.

30. As to claim 17, Kahn discloses a switchable polarizing apparatus for optical projection displays (see Fig. 1), said apparatus comprising:

a first electrode for receiving a first driving signal [a first barbus 35-1, see Fig. 3], and a second electrode for receiving a second driving signal [a second barbus 35-2, see Fig. 3], wherein the first and second driving signals are different [AC voltage source connected between the front electrodes 35-1 and rear electrodes 35-2 through switch, see Fig. 3]. The term "AC potential" or "AC voltage" defines an electric current that reverses direction sinusoidally and that has alternately positive and negative values.

See www.dictionary.reference.com, Source: WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University. Thus, positive voltage value and negative voltage value correspond to a first voltage signal and second voltage signal];

a layer of liquid crystal material positioned between the first and second electrodes [liquid crystal molecules 20, see Fig. 2];

Accordingly, Kahn discloses all of the claimed limitation except for two current sources, each which connects to each of electrodes;

Franklin conventionally discloses wherein the drawing of currents through the electrodes includes coupling the electrodes to two current sources [The current path provided by the fixed potential connected to the heater is principally through the rear LCD electrodes and therefore the alternating currents across the rear electrode capacitor and the front electrode capacitor flowing through the fixed potential connection are different. This creates an imbalance with respect to the capacitance between the front and the rear LCD electrodes resulting in a net DC current flow, see col. 2, lines 48-56. Thus, there are two current sources, each which connects to each one of electrodes];

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement two current sources as conventionally disclosed by Franklin in the LCD device of Kahn in order to achieve the benefit of intend to drive the LCD device, because one of ordinary skill in the art would be reasonably apprised of this would supply current values for electrodes of LCD device;

The combination of Kahn and Franklin discloses all of the claimed limitation, except for a buffer circuit coupled to the first and second electrodes, said buffer circuit applying the driving voltage signals to the first and second electrodes, said driving signals sustaining the first and second currents through the electrodes;

However, Kato teaches a related LCD device which includes the operational amplifiers 27 and 29 have their output terminals connected across the electrodes 1a and 2a (see Fig. 4, col. 36-37);

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement the operational amplifiers as taught by Kato in the of Kahn and Franklin in order to achieve the benefit of intend to drive the LCD device, because one of ordinary skill in the art would be reasonably apprised of operational amplifier would provide the feedback/gain of the voltage/current values at the output terminal of each of operational amplifiers.

31. As to claim 18, Kato teaches wherein the buffer circuit includes a programmable gain amplifier for each electrode, each amplifier applying the driving voltage signal to its corresponding electrode [the driver circuit 32 comprises the operational amplifiers 27 and 29 have their output terminals connected across the electrodes 1a and 2a, see Fig. 4, col. 36-40].

32. As to claim 19, Kato teaches wherein each programmable gain amplifier receives a polarization drive signal and a reference voltage signal, the reference voltage signal determining the magnitude of the driving voltage signal applied by the amplifier, and the polarization drive signal determining the polarity of the driving voltage signal applied by the amplifier [The switch 26 has one output terminal (O1) bifurcate to connect one end to the positive input terminal (+) of an operational amplifier 27, and the other end to ground via a resistance 28. Simultaneously, the same switch 26 has another output terminal (O2) bifurcate to connect one end to the positive input terminal (+) of another operational amplifier 29, and the other end to ground via a resistance 30 with its control terminal (C) being connected to an oscillatory circuit 31, see Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 16-25. Thus, at least one positive input terminal (+) of an operational amplifier

27 corresponds to the polarization drive signal, the ground corresponds to the reference voltage signal].

33. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Franklin in view of Ando, and further in view of Anderson et al (US 6,130,731) hereinafter Anderson.

The combination of Franklin and Ando conventionally discloses all of the claimed limitation, except wherein the polarizer is a polarizing switch of an electronic color switch;

However, Anderson teaches a related LCD device which includes polarizer, see fig. 13C, and color switching device, see col. 6, lines 17-18;

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement the polarizer with color switching device as taught by Anderson in the combination of Franklin and Ando in order to achieve the benefit of intend to make color display for LCD device, because this would provide high resolution more easily obtainable and also allow integration with a polarization modulator for stereoscopic vision (see Anderson, col. 9, lines 55-60).

34. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kahn in view of Anderson et al (US 6,130,731) hereinafter Anderson.

Kahn discloses all of the claimed limitation, except wherein the polarizer is a polarizing switch of an electronic color switch;

However, Anderson teaches a related LCD device which includes polarizer, see fig. 13C, and color switching device, see col. 6, lines 17-18;

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement the polarizer with color switching device as taught by Anderson in the LCD of Kahn in order to achieve the benefit of intend to make color display for LCD device, because this would provide high resolution more easily obtainable and also allow integration with a polarization modulator for stereoscopic vision (see Anderson, col. 9, lines 55-60).

35. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Franklin in view of Giallozenri et al (US 3,963310) hereinafter Giallozenri.

36. Claim 24 shares similar limitations to those included in claim 1 and therefore the rationale of rejection will be the same. Claim 24 has the added limitation driving said set of electrodes to establish an electric field across said layer of liquid crystal to control polarization states of said liquid crystal;

However, Giallozenri teaches a related LCD display device which includes an electrical current may be applied by a source 27 controlled by switch 28. Application of an electrical current produces an electric-field between the electrodes, see Fig. 6, col. 7, lines 61-47;

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to implement the electrical current produces an electric-field between the electrodes as taught by Giallozenri in the LCD device of Franklin in order to achieve the benefit of intend to drive the LCD device, because this would change the index of refraction and which causes the liquid-crystal molecules 23 to align with the electric field (see Giallozenri, col. 7, lines 47-49).

Response to Arguments

37. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

38. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin M. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-7697. The examiner can normally be reached on MON-THU from 8:00-6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick N. Edouard can be reached on 571-272-7603. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8000.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the Patent Application Information Retrieval system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Kevin M. Nguyen
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2674

KMN

January 12, 2006



PATRICK N. EDOUARD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER